

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 and 11 are amended by this response. Claim 3 is canceled. No claims are added. Accordingly, following entry of these amendments and remarks, claims 1-2, 4-9, and 11-14 will remain pending for examination.

In the most recent Office Action, the Examiner indicated the allowability of claims 13-14. These claims are unaltered by the instant response and accordingly remain in condition for allowance.

Also in the latest Office Action received, the Examiner objected to claim 9, but indicated that this claim would be allowable if amended to include the elements of the parent independent claim. Applicants note that claim 9 is currently in independent form, and thus believe that this claim is in conditions for allowance.

Finally, Applicants appreciate the courtesy of the telephone interview conducted with the Examiner Kapadia on November 13, 2006. In that interview, the Examiner indicated that certain claims might be allowable if amended to more specifically describe the sector "recording state" information upon which the write inhibit slice is based. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 11 have now been amended to indicate that the write inhibit slice is set based upon information regarding a degree of proximity erasure by said head, or information on rewrite counts of said neighboring sectors, both which were recited in original claim 3 (now canceled).

Because the Nishida Patent relied upon by the Examiner neither teaches, nor even suggests, setting a write inhibit slice based upon either of the above types of information, it is respectfully asserted that the pending claims are not obvious in view of that reference. The pending claims are accordingly in condition for allowance and should be passed to issuance.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believes all claims pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kent J. Tobin', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

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